

In December of 2003, I bought a Camry XLE with side and curtain airbags. This car was not my first choice, but I found it very difficult to find in inexpensive car with these important airbags included as an option, despite what was stated on the carmakers' websites and literature. Many carmakers did not offer this safety feature in their less-expensive models. The salesmen were eager to use this fact to their advantage, and tried to lure me to buy a more expensive vehicle. I searched high and low for an affordable, safe car, and feel that the carmakers parcel out these safety features one by one, rather than implementing them as soon as the technology is available because they want to use them as carrots to lure the consumer into upgrading their vehicle every two or three years.

For several years, we have known that side and curtain air bags save lives. It seems to me that an important safety features the side and curtain airbags should be included in all cars, not controlled by the narrow corporate interests of the carmakers nor the pocketbook of the buyer.